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OBITUARY**James Constantine Pilling**

The scholarly article on the writings of Padre Andres de Olmos on pages 43-60 of this volume was the last notable publication of James Constantine Pilling, bibliographer and administrative officer; he died July 26, 1895, of locomotor ataxia, from which he had been a constant sufferer for years.

Despite a painful and hopeless malady, Mr Pilling was an industrious, prolific, and erudite student of literature relating to the native American languages. During 1894 he put through the Government press a bibliography of the Wakashan languages; in 1893 he issued a bibliography of the Salishan languages and a bibliography of the Chinookan languages (including the Chinook jargon); during the next preceding year his bibliography of the Athapascan languages was prepared and issued; in 1891 he prepared and revised the most extended of his bibliographies, that relating to the Algonquian languages, a volume of 625 pages, illustrated by facsimiles of titles of rare works; in 1889 his bibliography of the Muskhogean languages was published, and during the preceding year that of the Iroquoian languages was made ready to leave the press; in 1887 the bibliographies of the Siouan and Eskimo languages were issued. These nine volumes are a rich store of knowledge pertaining to American ethnology; the work is primarily linguistic, yet the mode of treatment is such that practically all of the more valuable early literature of the American Indians is listed and described. The series represents the fruition of the plan for a bibliography of the languages of the North American Indians set forth in a quarto volume of nearly 1,200 pages by the same author, issued in the form of proof-sheets in 1885. This bibliographic work was projected by Major J. W. Powell,



James C. Peeling

and Mr Pilling was placed in charge of it on account of his learning, accuracy, and literary ability. No class of the scientific publications of the Government has been received with greater favor by scholars; wherever anthropology is cultivated throughout the world, there Pilling's bibliographies are known.

For several years Mr Pilling was chief clerk of the Bureau of American Ethnology, and also of the United States Geological Survey, and much of his bibliographic material was accumulated while he was engaged in the performance of the arduous duties attending these offices. His faculties were such that he was able to carry forward the literary work without prejudice to his administrative duties, which were performed with noteworthy ability and judgment; indeed, no inconsiderable part of the success of the two bureaus is to be ascribed to his skill, tact, and energy in administrative work.

In early manhood Mr Pilling came in contact with Major Powell, whom he accompanied into the field and by whom his bent of mind and subsequent career were measurably determined. His interest in Indians and in linguistics grew out of this association. He had already made himself a stenographer of exceptional skill, and had acquired literary knowledge through employment in a book store. His education, begun in the public schools of Washington, was perfected in Gonzaga College. He was born in Washington November 16, 1846.

In the world of letters James Constantine Pilling was and will be known as a bibliographer of notable acumen and erudition; in the Federal capital he was most widely known as an upright and courteous administrative officer. Among his more intimate acquaintances at home and abroad he is remembered as a man of exceptional integrity and amiability. Powell, who knew him long and intimately, says: "In all my life I have never known a man more steadfast to his moral and intellectual convictions, which were held with that charity for others which is possible only to those who have strong and well-founded convictions of their own." His official associates, joining in an expression of sorrow on receiving the intelligence of his death, said: "In recalling our associations with him we recollect no discourteous act or word, even when the burden of duty pressed most heavily; we recollect no selfish or narrow decision; on exchanging ideas

we all, without exception, agree that we have known no man of higher integrity or better motives. His administrative work was a model, and its results in the bureaus with which he was connected constitute a monument."

Mr Pilling left a consort, to whose tireless solicitude through years of painful decline the completion of so much of his work is due, and a young daughter.

W J McGEE.
